

Message Text

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42

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-11 ISO-00 EURE-00 SAM-01 CIAE-00 COME-00

EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

L-03 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /083 W

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P R 151442Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4240

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USEC BRUSSELS 1894

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 0272

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, SP

SUBJECT: RECENT VISIT TO SPAIN OF IMF SEC GEN HERMAN REBHAN

REF: (A) GENEVA 9537, (B) MADRID 9086

BEGIN SUMMARY: SUCCESSFUL JAN 2-11 VISIT TO SPAIN OF SEC GEN HERMAN REBHAN OF INTERNATIONAL METAL WORKERS FEDERATION (IMF) IN GENEVA HAS GENERATED MUCH PUBLICITY AND HAS BOOSTED STOCK OF UGT AND USO HOSTS. END SUMMARY.

1. PURSUANT TO REQUEST OF AMERICAN IMF SEC GEN HERMAN REBHAN (REF A), REBHAN TALKED WITH LABOR ATTACHE SHORTLY AFTER ARRIVAL ON JAN 3, AND
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ON JAN 11 JUST BEFORE DEPARTURE.

2. REBHAN'S WEEK IN SPAIN WAS SPENT IN MADRID, BARCELONA AND BILBAO. HIS HOSTS WERE THE TWO IMF SPANISH TRADE UNION AFFILIATES, I.E., SOCIALIST UGT AND CATHOLIC-ORIENTED USO, AND HE WAS CAREFUL TO DIVIDE HIS TIME EQUALLY BETWEEN THE TWO TRADE UNIONS. USO AND UGT ALSO ARRANGED FOR REBHAN TO MEET WITH VARIOUS OF THEIR ADHERENTS IN METAL SECTOR, INCLUDING MEETINGS WITH WORKERS OF CURRENTLY-STRUCK CHRYSLER AND STANDARD-ELECTRICAL FACTORIES. REBHAN SAID CURRENT LIBERAL ATMOSPHERE UNDER NEW SPANISH GOVT WAS EVIDENCED BY FACT HE WAS ABLE TO GIVE OPEN PRESS CONFERENCES, IN EACH OF CITIES VISITED, AND IN ABSENCE, SO FAR AS HE KNEW, OF ANY SURVEILLANCE OF HIM BY THE AUTHORITIES. HE CONTRASTED THIS WITH HIS LAST PREVIOUS VISIT TO SPAIN IN OCTOBER 1974 WHEN HE WAS FOLLOWED EVERYWHERE BY THE POLICE. REBHAN WAS ACCOMPANIED BY CARLOS PARDO, SPANISH UGT EMIGRANT WORKER WHO IS A FUNCTIONARY IN GENEVA OF BOTH IMF AND GERMAN IG METAL UNION. REBHAN SAID HE DELIBERATELY AVOIDED ANY CONTACT WITH BOTH GOVT-CONTROLLED SPANISH SYNDICAL ORGANIZATION (SSO) AND COMMUNIST-DOMINATED WORKERS COMMISSIONS. WHEN ASKED AT PRESS CONFERENCES WHETHER HE HAD CONTACTS WITH WORKERS COMMISSIONS OR ITS LEADER, MARCELINO CAMACHO, REBHAN'S STANDARD REPLY WAS THAT HE HAD NONE SINCE WORKERS COMMISSIONS WERE CONTROLLED BY A WELL-KNOWN POLITICAL PARTY, WERE NOT A TRADE UNION, THEIR IMPORTANCE WAS EXAGGERATED AND HE HAD NO INTEREST IN TALKING TO CAMACHO WITH WHOM HE HAD NOTHING IN COMMON,

3. REBHAN CONCLUDED (A) BOTH UGT AND USO REMAIN SMALL BUT ARE GROWING; (B) UGT AND USO ARE ONLY TRADE UNIONS WHICH OFFER EFFECTIVE PROSPECT OF COMPETING AGAINST COMMUNIST-DOMINATED WORKERS COMMISSIONS; (C) LONG-TIME UGT AND USO EFFORTS TO MERGE HAVE RESULTED IN FAILURE, AND, ALTHOUGH IMF HAD FAVORED UNIFICATION, IT SHOULD NOW SUPPORT EACH OF THESE UNIONS SEPARATELY; (D) PCE STILL CONTROLS WORKERS COMMISSIONS IN MOST AREAS; (E) COMMUNIST INFILTRATION OF SSO IN LAST SUMMER'S SHOP STEWARD ELECTIONS HAD BEEN SUBSTANTIAL, PARTICULARLY IN BARCELONA AREA; (F) GOVT HAD HANDLED LAST WEEK'S SUBWAY STRIKE IN INTELLIGENT MANNER, BUT REAL TEST OF NEW GOVT WAS CURRENT STRIKE WAVE IN METAL SECTOR IN WHICH GOVT WAS STARTING TO MAKE MISTAKES AND APPEARED TO BE REVERTING TO SOME POLICE REPRESSION. (G) ATTITUDES OF SOME OF US CONFIDENTIAL

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MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS IN CURRENT SPANISH STRIKE WAVE, PARTICULARLY CHRYSLER AND ITT, WAS ADDING TO ALREADY EXISTING ANTI-AMERICAN SENTIMENT AMONG MANY WORKERS WHO FELT US GOVT HAD BEEN A PRINCIPAL PROP OF FRANCO REGIME, AND (H) IMF ASST SEC GEN DANIEL BENEDICT WOULD BE MUCH LESS INVOLVED WITH SPANISH AFFAIRS THAN IN THE PAST AND REBHAN'S DIRECT INVOLVEMENT WITH SPAIN WOULD CORRESPONDINGLY INCREASE.

4. REBHAN SAID IMF WOULD BE MORE ACTIVE IN FUTURE IN HELPING ITS SPANISH UGT AND USO AFFILIATES, WITH ULTIMATE OBJECTIVE BEING TO DECREASE INFLUENCE OF THE PCE AND WORKERS COMMISSIONS AND INCREASE PROSPECTS FOR FREE TRADE UNIONS IN SPAIN. IMF HELP WOULD NOT ONLY BE FINANCIAL, IN FORM OF CONTRIBUTIONS FROM ITS MEMBER UNIONS, BUT ALSO IN TERMS OF PRESSURE UPON FOREIGN PARENT COMPANIES OF MULTINATIONAL FIRMS WHEN THEIR SPANISH AFFILIATES HAD LABOR PROBLEMS. REBHAN THUS CLAIMED HE HAD SENT OFF COMMUNICATIONS TO UAW VICE PRESIDENT DOUGLAS FRAZER IN DETROIT ASKING HIM FOR UAW INTERVENTION WITH PARENT CHRYSLER COMPANY PROTESTING ACTIONS OF CHRYSLER'S SPANISH AFFILIATE (E.G. MEASURES TO FIRE RINGLEADERS) IN CURRENT STRIKE.

5. REBHAN SAID HE WILL BE BACK IN SPAIN IN EARLY FEBRUARY ACCOMPANYING IGMETALL SEC GEN EUGEN LODERER ON A VISIT OF THE GERMAN TRADE UNION LEADER TO SPAIN AS GUEST OF UGT AND USO. REBHAN SAID HE WOULD ALSO ENCOURAGE OTHER SIMILAR VISITS BY INTERNATIONAL TRADE SECRETARIATS AND OTHER FREE TRADE UNION LEADERS AND DELEGATIONS TO SPAIN.

6. COMMENT, REBHAN'S VISIT APPEARS HAVE BEEN FAIRLY SUCCESSFUL AND GENERATED SUBSTANTIAL COVERAGE AND INTEREST IN PRESS, AMID RECENTLY INCREASED ATMOSPHERE OF PRESS FREEDOM, WHICH HAS REDOUNDED TO BENEFIT OF UGT AND USO. PRESS HAS ALSO GIVEN PROMINENCE TO REBHAN'S CREDENTIALS AND BACKGROUND AS PROMINENT AMERICAN UAW TRADE UNIONIST. EMBASSY WELCOMES AND ENCOURAGES SUCH INCREASING VISITS BY INTERNATIONAL FREE TRADE UNION LEADERS AND DELEGATIONS, WHICH VISITS PROVIDE A BOOST IN PRESTIGE AND INFLUENCE OF UGT AND USO, ONLY SIGNIFICANT DEMOCRATIC AND MODERATE TRADE UNIONS AMONG ILLEGAL SPANISH LABOR OPPOSITION.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MADRID00272
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760015-0821
From: MADRID
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760154/aaaabwxc.tel
Line Count: 145
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 GENEVA 9537, 75 MADRID 9086
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 MAR 2004 by CollinP0>; APPROVED <03 AUG 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RECENT VISIT TO SPAIN OF IMF SEC GEN HERMAN REBHAN
TAGS: ELAB, OVIP, SP, IMF, (REBHAN, HERMAN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006